



The President's Daily Brief

23 June 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The heaviest fighting in South Vietnam is on the northern front. (Page 1)

Vietnamese Communist officials in foreign countries are complaining about the behavior of the USSR and China. (Page 2)

Government forces in south Laos are making headway against the enemy. (Page 3)

The European Communities have agreed to regular consultations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. (Page 4)

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VIETNAM

The fighting has eased somewhat northwest of Hue, where the Communists are attacking the government's My Chanh River defense line. The heaviest action has been reported in the western sector of the line where South Vietnamese airborne forces and allied air strikes drove back the enemy. Camp Evans, the government's northernmost strongpoint, came under heavy rocket and artillery fire and its artillery ammunition depot reportedly has been destroyed. At least two North Vietnamese regiments, supported by artillery and armor, were involved in the attacks. Intercepted communications indicate that the "immediate mission" of these forces is to "prepare to liberate Thua Thien Province and Hue."

Along the central coast, the Communists are continuing light mortar attacks and ground probes in Phu My District of Binh Dinh Province. Elsewhere, South Vietnamese forces are still meeting resistance near the Kontum Pass and to the south of An Loc. Radio direction-finding shows that elements of the North Vietnamese 5th Division have moved deeper into the northern part of the Mekong Delta.

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Communist supply activity in the Laos panhandle is at very low levels as a result of seasonal rains, but aerial photography indicates that large quantities of supplies are moving across the DMZ, presumably to support Communist military action in northern South Vietnam. Farther south, large quantities of supplies have been stockpiled in southern Laos and there are signs of extensive activity--including the use of waterways--to move supplies into southern South Vietnam and Cambodia.

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NORTH VIETNAM - CHINA - USSR

Vietnamese Communist officials abroad are putting out a gloomy line on US actions against North Vietnam and the subsequent behavior of Hanoi's two major allies.

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Such grumbling is becoming a staple among North Vietnamese representatives abroad. In some cases the complainers may be reflecting genuine concern within the leadership in Hanoi, but they may be deliberately overplaying Hanoi's domestic and international woes in order to win additional sympathy and support for the Vietnamese Communist cause.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**LAOS**

Government forces in south Laos are gradually regaining control of the Khong Sedone area despite some determined enemy resistance. Irregular units have occupied the main part of the town and driven North Vietnamese forces from hilltop positions to the west. Communist troops, however, are still hitting the government forces with artillery fire.

Farther south, irregular units are also making some progress in their efforts to clear enemy forces from the western edge of the Bolovens Plateau. Intercepts indicate, however, that North Vietnamese forces have been ordered to halt the irregulars who are pushing north along Route 231. Other enemy troops, meanwhile, have increased pressure near the junction of Routes 23/231, but the government has several battalions in reserve to block any Communist move westward.

The success thus far of the irregular battalions at Khong Sedone and on the edge of the Bolovens will ease fears of a Communist assault on Pakse.

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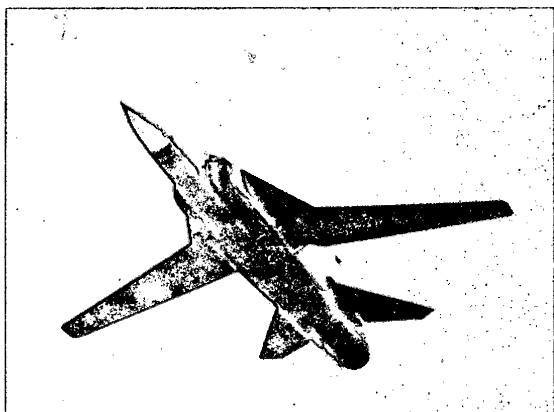
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES - ASEAN

Last week, representatives of the European Communities and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations created a permanent committee for consultations between the two groups, culminating a process that began last fall. The ASEAN is composed of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Last autumn, EC representatives had hinted they would have liked the participation of South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, as well, but these states were not represented in Brussels. The meeting last week did not go into detail about future EC-ASEAN relations, but drew up a long list of economic topics for subsequent discussion.

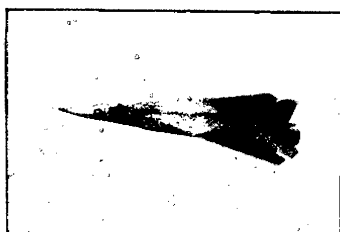
This arrangement may mark the beginning of greater European involvement in Southeast Asian affairs. Since last fall, the talks have been carried on by the EC's directorate for external relations, rather than the office for external trade, giving the initiative a political tone.

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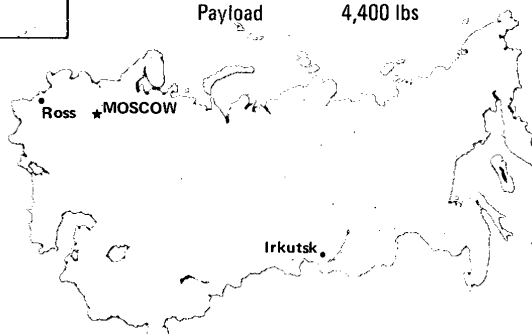
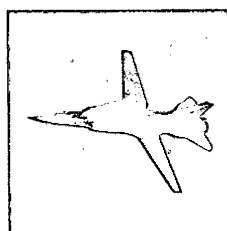
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**Soviets Resume
Flogger Deliveries**



Length 53 ft
Wing span 46 ft extended
26 ft swept
Speed 1,320 kts
Combat radius 630 nm
Combat ceiling 54,000 ft
Payload 4,400 lbs



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NOTES

USSR: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Soviets have resumed delivery of their new swing-wing fighter (Flogger) to tactical air units after a hiatus of almost 20 months. Ross airfield in the western USSR recently received as many as 17 of the craft. The last delivery of Floggers was made in late 1970, but production has continued at Moscow and Irkutsk and over 200 have been turned out. The delay in deliveries may have been due to technical difficulties within the aircraft. The Flogger is expected to supplant the MIG-21 as the primary Soviet fighter by the late 1970s.

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France: [REDACTED]

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